

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

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P R 030608Z SEP 75

FM AMCONSUL PORT MORESBY

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 845

INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

C O N F I D E N T I A L PORT MORESBY 0909

FOR EA: HABIB

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, PP

SUBJ: U.S. DEL TO PNG INDEPENDENCE

1. I DISLIKE BOTHERING YOU WITH PNG PROBLEMS BUT MUST CALL YOUR ATTENTION TO DIFFICULTIES THAT ARE ARISING BECAUSE COMPOSITION OF U.S. DEL TO PNG INDEPENDENCE IS NOT YET ANNOUNCED.

2. CHIEF MINISTER SOMARE EXTENDED ADVANCE NOTIFICATION OF INVITATION TO PRESIDENT ON JUNE 20, AND ELEVEN WEEKS HAVE ELAPSED SINCE WE KNEW OF INVITATION. BUT THE USG HAS NOT YET NAMED ITS DELEGATION. THIS DELAY IS CREATING DIFFICULTIES FOR THE PEOPLE WHO ARE HANDLING THE PROGRAM, AS THEY MUST MAKE ADVANCE PREPARATIONS RE HOTELS, CARS, INVITATIONS AND HUNDREDS OF OTHER DETAILS. THE CEREMONIES BEGIN IN TEN DAYS.

3. MORE SERIOUS THAN THE ADMINISTRATIVE PROBLEMS IS THE IMPLICATION THAT THE USG IS INDIFFERENT TO THE POINT OF RUDENESS ABOUT PNG IN CONNECTION WITH CEREMONIES OF TREMENDOUS IMPORTANCE HERE, IN ADDITION TO OUR EXTREME SLOWNESS IN RESPONDING TO THEIR INVITATION, THE U.S. REP ON THE TRUSTEESHIP COUNCIL DELEGATION TO INDEPENDENCE WILL NOT BE AMBASSADOR WHITE AS ORIGINALLY EXPECTED BUT WILL BE A MIDDLE LEVEL OFFICER FROM TOKYO. FURTHER, VOA REQUESTED PERMISSION TO SEND REPRESENTATIVE TO COVER THE CEREMONIES FOR VOA BROADCAST, BUT IT HAS NOW WITHDRAWN THE REQUEST.

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4. THE PNG IS UNSURE OF ITSELF, ESPECIALLY IN DEALING WITH A MAJOR POWER, AND THERE WAS REAL HESITATION ABOUT INVITING THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES. NOW, AFTER INVITING HIM THEY CAN ONLY FEEL DISAPPOINTED ABOUT THE TURN OF EVENTS. THEY ARE VERY POLITE PEOPLE, AND THEY MAY INTERPRET OUR ACTIONS (AND INACTIONS) AS RUDENESS, AND AS AN INTENTIONAL SLIGHT.

5. IN VIEW OF THE POOR START TO U.S.-PNG RELATIONS THAT IS LIKELY TO RESULT FROM FURTHER DELAY, I ASK YOU TO DO WHATEVER YOU CAN TO EXPEDITE MATTERS.
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